

By doing so, this bill not only helps us slash energy costs for working families but also reduces our dependence on foreign fuel sources, which, in turn, benefits our environment and bolsters our national security.

America continues to be one of the cleanest energy producers in the world. For example, Russian natural gas exported to Europe has a lifecycle emissions profile 41 percent higher than U.S. liquefied natural gas exported to Europe. In fact, if the European Union switched all of their natural gas imports in 2021 from Russian to U.S., it is estimated that global emissions would have been reduced by over 218 million tons.

That is not to mention that the U.S. is at least 50 percent import reliant for 48 different mineral commodities, 24 of which come from China and 6 of which come from Russia.

Our energy security is national security, and it allows our Nation to deliver greater global emission reductions that substantially lower energy prices.

Madam Speaker, I am glad to say that not only will this bill benefit the people of my district at the pump and on their energy bills, but thanks to my amendment, I have guaranteed that it also protects the beautiful coastal waters that southeast Virginians call home by ensuring the existing moratoriums on drilling off the coast of Virginia are not affected.

We have worked very hard on the Natural Resources Committee to ensure this bill will directly benefit the American people.

We must restore strength in our economy, and that starts with restoring America's energy independence. Republicans are leading on this issue, and it is my hope that this bill will make its way to the President's desk and be signed into law so all Americans can benefit.

HONORING THE GALLAUDET ELEVEN

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Gallaudet Eleven and highlight their important yet seemingly unknown contributions during the space race, contributions that led to invaluable scientific knowledge and, eventually, the successful Apollo 11 Moon landing.

Before NASA could send humans to space, the agency needed to better understand the effects of prolonged weightlessness on the human body.

So, in the late 1950s, NASA and the U.S. Naval School of Aviation Medicine established a joint research program to study these effects. They recruited 11 deaf men from Gallaudet University: Harold Domich, Robert Greenmun, Barron Gulak, Raymond Harper, Jerald Jordan, Harry Larson, David Myers, Donald Peterson, Raymond Piper, Alvin Steele, and John Zakutney.

All but one of these men had lost their hearing early in their lives due to spinal meningitis, which damaged the vestibular system of their inner ear in a way that made them immune to motion sickness.

Now known as the Gallaudet Eleven, these men underwent extensive testing over the course of 10 years, pushing their bodies to the limits to advance our space program.

The testing and experiments included living 12 days straight inside a 20-foot slow rotation room, which remained in a constant motion of 10 revolutions per minute, a 200-mile journey on the choppy seas off the coast of Nova Scotia, and a series of zero-G flights in the notorious "vomit comet" aircraft.

The decade's worth of experimentation gave researchers critical insight into how the body's sensory system works when gravitational cues from the inner ear aren't available, as in the case of space flight. This insight helped give researchers the information they needed to safely send other men to space.

We cannot ignore that the space race played a significant part in the Cold War. Americans and Soviets competed to prove their technological and intellectual superiority by becoming the first nation to put a human into space.

When we landed on the Moon, our astronauts were seen as the ultimate American heroes, a distinction they would not have enjoyed without the contributions of the Gallaudet Eleven.

The service of these 11 men to the United States embodies a legacy of bravery, dedication, and love of country.

Madam Speaker, please join me in expressing gratitude to the Gallaudet Eleven for their honorable service to our Nation.

I hope that by highlighting the critical contributions of these unsung heroes, I have helped ignite an effort to provide them with the recognition and credit that they are due.

PROBLEMS CAUSED BY NAVY DRY DOCK CLOSURES

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address my grave concerns with the recent closure of four Navy dry docks that are responsible for maintaining our Navy fleet and sustaining our Naval seapower and maritime strength.

Approximately 7 weeks ago, the U.S. Navy closed three dry docks at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton and another at the nearby Trident Refit Facility in Bangor, Washington.

One of these dry docks that was closed was the only dry dock on the West Coast certified to repair a nuclear aircraft carrier.

Without this vital infrastructure in place, our aircraft carriers in the Pacific are left completely vulnerable. We are now left with one dry dock on the East Coast that has the capacity to repair an aircraft carrier.

Combined, these shipyards used to have 22 dry docks. With 4 out of commission, we are down to 18 and have lost 22 percent of our critical Naval support infrastructure. We are now left with one dry dock on the East Coast that has the capacity to repair an aircraft carrier.

As a result of significant divestment in the 1990s, our Nation has only four public shipyards: Puget Sound and Pearl Harbor on the West Coast and Norfolk and Portsmouth on the East Coast.

As you can see here in this graph, the U.S. now has the fewest public shipyards than any other time since the end of World War II. Additionally, we now have 36 percent of the Navy's attack submarine fleet either in or waiting for maintenance.

This backlog is due to a multitude of factors, including workforce challenges, but having fewer shipyards and dry docks is a significant part of the problem.

This problem impacts the readiness of our submarines and aircraft carriers and our entire Navy fleet, the men and women who crew them, the defense industrial base, and our national defense as a whole.

Without the basic infrastructure needed to support our Navy, how can we possibly provide adequate defense capabilities if called upon to engage with our adversaries.

If we were to engage in conflict with a near-peer adversary such as China, we need to have infrastructure at the ready to repair damaged vessels in a timely manner and return them to their area of operation.

□ 1230

Increasing our maritime industrial base, including dry docks, is absolutely critical for our Navy to be able to effectively defend the United States and must be prioritized in our national defense budget.

I came to Congress to restore Americans' strength. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee from both sides of the aisle to ensure that we support and invest in our public shipyards in order to protect and defend our great Nation.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MILITARY PAY MUST BE INCREASED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Madam Speaker, I thank my fellow naval aviator from Virginia for this precious time.

Madam Speaker, today I rise as a formal naval officer who is concerned for our enlisted troops, and particularly our junior enlisted troops within the Department of Defense, the soldiers, the sailors, the airmen, the marines, the space guardians.

As a massive government rolls forward spending more and more and gathering more and more debt, our enlisted troops continue to do the tough

work of providing Americans their security blanket.

Just last night, we had nine Army soldiers killed in a tragic training accident in a Black Hawk helicopter in Kentucky. They make such great sacrifices on a daily basis, and our enlisted folks are doing this work for almost no compensation.

When I reflect on just how little our junior enlisted ranks earn, I am left begging the question, Madam Speaker, who is providing them with their security? What lobbyist group is advocating for junior enlisted personnel, who when they first join the military are making about \$23,000 a year?

Madam Speaker, I know you are familiar with this, having served your country, but this is a pay table from the DOD for fiscal year 2023 showing what our enlisted troops make, and you can see when they first join, they are actually making less than \$21,000 a year. It is not until they are actually above an E-3 with E-4 rank over 4 years, 5 years that they are actually above what we would consider minimum wage of \$15 an hour, or \$32,000 a year.

It is about \$11 per hour, what they are being paid right now for what would be a normal 40-hour work week. In California, fast-food workers start at \$22 an hour. By the way, our troops, they are not usually working 40-hour work weeks. As you know, they are working 60 to 80 hours per week, especially if they are on deployment.

I ask our fellow Americans and legislators to let that sink in. Let it sink in that the starting wage of a McDonald's worker is twice that of the starting wage of our junior enlisted troops. The McDonald's worker, however, doesn't get his head shaved. He doesn't have some of his rights and freedoms taken away. The McDonald's worker doesn't go on deployments for 6 to 12 months at a time, and he doesn't put his life on the line for his beautiful country during both peace time and training operations. Twenty-two McDonald's workers a day don't take their own lives by suicide each day. \$11 per hour, that is what we pay our troops.

A third of our troops, Madam Speaker, qualify for food stamps. Even China is paying their enlisted troops more than we are.

Madam Speaker, who is making sure that our enlisted troops are getting the resources that they need to provide for their family, not just the financial resources but food, safe housing, daycare, schools for their children, and jobs for their spouses? The DOD officers have an organization called MOAA, or the Military Officers Association of America.

The Pentagon has their top brass that come to the Hill and testify asking to make sure that they get all the weapons they require to maintain the pointy edge of the spear, but the sad fact remains that the junior enlisted of our military remain largely unrepresented and without a champion.

We wonder why we suffer from record-low recruitment, record-low retention. Today's retention problem is tomorrow's recruiting crisis. Pay and quality of life are the biggest drivers right now in our challenges to retention.

Members of Congress—I have seen it for several years from both sides of the aisle—have stood at these very podiums, thumping their chests speaking about the 3 to 5 percent pay raises and they are taking care of our troops. They say we are taking care of our troops. These are record-high pay raises, they say. I guarantee you that is going to happen again over the next several months. We are taking care of our troops. We are giving them record-high pay.

It is a bunch of crap.

In the midst of 7 to 8 percent inflation, and when your base pay is only \$22,000 a year, a 5 percent increase is only about \$90 a month. That is easily swallowed up in your first trip to the gas station. Politicians can thump their chest and try to make themselves feel better about themselves, but don't stand here and tell us that you are taking care of the troops because for far too long the welfare of our enlisted troops has gone without a shepherd in Congress and without leadership in the Pentagon and without a true champion.

There have been freebie talking points that are easy to see, but they are being masked by anemic and hollow actions from flag officers and politicians the same, and that ends now, Madam Speaker.

Last year, my Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act passed both Chambers of Congress and was signed into law by the President in January. I am grateful for that. It helped about 140,000 Active-Duty families. This law requires all 50 States to recognize the professional licenses of Active-Duty spouses. If they are a nurse, a teacher, a real estate agent, cosmetologist, their licenses are now recognized across State lines when our Active-Duty families get orders to a new State.

To our troops and their spouses throughout the Nation, if you are currently having any push back from credentialing boards or licensing boards in your State, wherever you are stationed, and they are not recognizing your license and you are the spouse of an Active-Duty member, please call my office. Work with your commanding officer, but call my office, and we will help you to make sure that your rights are adhered to and honored and that your license is honored, as well. This is the law of the land, and you have rights now in this regard.

Madam Speaker, I am proud of that achievement from last session, but this session has to be focused on base pay, especially for our junior enlisted. I have introduced a bill that ensures that the DOD minimum base pay salary is \$31,200. This figure gets an E-1 up

to parity with every other industry in the Nation where \$15 per hour is the generally accepted minimum wage. This \$31,200 represents about a 50 percent increase to base pay for enlisted personnel. While that may sound high, we have to remember how low the starting point is.

This will save us money by needing fewer recruitment bonuses and fewer retention bonuses after they join the military.

Our Nation's most precious asset or our most potent weapon is our troops, the Active-Duty men and women in uniform and, specifically, the workhorses of our DOD forces, the enlisted personnel.

We can have Stealth bombers, nuclear submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles, sexy fighter jets, hypersonic weapons, and the most advanced satellites up in space, but on our current recruitment and retention trajectory, we will still lose a war against a peer threat like China. We will still lose a two-front war against near-peer adversaries.

With the most lethal arsenal in the world, we are still not secure unless we take care of our troops. I will not stand at this podium or any other and feign support for big bills that provide small support for our troops. I won't do it. Our military, it begs for inspiration and for a mission. It craves leadership and it thrives on patriotism.

Our enlisted troops, they will literally climb mountains, they will move mountains, and they will give their life in defense of our way of life, but they won't complain about their pay because they are noble warriors. They are humble warriors.

As a Nation, we must reestablish our dominance on the global stage, a position, frankly, that we lost in the wake of the Afghanistan debacle.

The gap between pay for our troops and their civilian counterparts right now is at an all-time high. All the while, China has closed the gap against the United States in several domains.

We need some wins under our belt when it comes to national security and readiness and taking care of our troops. The men and women in fancy suits in this Chamber and the Chamber just 600 feet north of here, they need to do the right thing for our troops wearing the military uniforms, not in 5 years, not in 1 year, but this year.

The Commander in Chief just 1.6 miles to the west should support us in this endeavor. I am willing to provide him the tools necessary to do it myself, if needed, but \$31,000 is a doable do for base pay for our enlisted, and it is necessary.

It is imperative that as we craft the National Defense Authorization Act, or the NDAA, and also write the defense appropriation bills, that we are adequately addressing the pay and the welfare of our troops and that we do so very soon this year.

I commit to our enlisted personnel that I will remain your champion in

Congress until we get this right. Your Nation has forgotten you and neglected you for too long, and that ends this year.

God bless our troops.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'S CORRECTIVE ACTION TO THE INSTITUTION OF SLAVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. I rise as a proud descendant of the enslaved people, who constructed the foundation upon which the greatness of America resides. They are the foundational mothers and fathers of this country.

Today, I rise, Madam Speaker, because I was accorded the preeminent privilege of speaking at the Georgetown University Law Center and I was accorded this opportunity to talk about the conscious agenda.

In so doing, we, my staff and I, did some research on Georgetown University and we discovered some things that I will share with you today.

First, I do want to thank the persons who made it possible for me to have this opportunity to speak today at Georgetown. I would like to thank Juan Thomas, the chair of the ABA Section of the Civil Rights and Social Justice Entity. This is an entity that is associated with the American Bar Association, and they were hosting this event today.

I would like to thank Dean Treanor. He is the executive vice president of Georgetown University Law Center.

I would like to thank Professor of Law Edelman. He is a person who has, quite frankly, helped to set a course of conduct that has made a difference in the lives of many people at the institution.

Today, Madam Speaker, I, having had this opportunity to visit Georgetown, would like to commend the university for what it has done and I would like to do so for things that persons ordinarily might not assume one would stand before the Congress, the country, if you will, and give such a commendation.

I am honored to do this because I think Georgetown University is the supreme, superb example of what an institution should do that has had some association with the institution of slavery.

I think that Georgetown University is a university that has set an example for the country, indeed for the United States of America itself, in terms of how we should respond to questions related to our association with the institution of slavery.

Today, I want to honor Georgetown University, founded in 1789 by John

Carroll, who was later appointed Archbishop of Baltimore in 1808. I honor this institution today because it took affirmative action to correct its association with the institution of slavery.

In 1838, 272 enslaved persons worth about \$3.3 million in today's dollars were sold in part to help pay off the school's debt. Obviously, this was not something that I would in any way celebrate. It is something that I find horrific.

The question then becomes: How has Georgetown University responded since this occurrence? Well, in September 2015, Georgetown University formed a working group on slavery, memory, and reconciliation to explore this history that it has associated with slavery.

In 2016, Georgetown created a department of African-American studies and set plans to establish an institute for the study of racial justice.

□ 1245

These two things alone are significant. The notion that a working group would be established for reconciliation, to explore it, to explore the memory, and to understand what slavery was all about as it relates to this institution, this working group has done an outstanding job.

I also have to acknowledge the fact that the African-American studies program was something that would give young people the opportunity to better understand more than what happened at Georgetown. It gives them an opportunity to understand what happened to Africans in the Americas.

Too often, this type of history is overlooked, and today, there are many who would erase this history. Significant work at the Georgetown Slavery Archive has been done.

In 2017, Georgetown offered an apology. It was not an apology without something more, not just a: "We are sorry it happened, and please have a nice day." It was an apology, and they held a liturgy of remembrance, contrition, and hope. It was a sincere apology.

It was an apology that would lead to other things. The apology wasn't the end. It was the genesis of more things that would be done.

In 2017, Georgetown dedicated two campus buildings to members of the descendant community—the "descendant community" would be descendants of slavery—dedicated two campus buildings to members of the descendant community.

It didn't stop there. Georgetown went on, in 2018, at the request of descendant leaders, Georgetown, the Jesuits, and descendants began truth and reconciliation work with the Kellogg Foundation.

This is the kind of work that has to be done so that we can get to the truth about what happened, so that we can have the transparency necessary to understand the history associated with slavery.

It is not pleasant, but it has to be done. It has to be done because if we don't do it, we allow ourselves to be vulnerable to these things being repeated.

Let's study this history. In 2019, Georgetown established a reconciliation fund that awards \$400,000 annually for community-based projects within descendant communities—\$400,000 annually.

Georgetown did not simply give an apology with nothing more than "we are sorry." Georgetown has taken upon itself to atone for what occurred and has done so by having a truth and reconciliation committee, worked with the Kellogg Foundation, and went on to establish a reconciliation fund that awards \$400,000 annually for community-based projects within descendant communities.

I think that Georgetown merits a special thank-you, and I, as a Member of Congress, intend to have a flag flown over the Capitol of the United States of America to be presented to Georgetown University for the way they have demonstrated that we can deal with the issue of slavery—demonstrated how to do this.

They have been an exemplar of how to do it and how to do it with a degree of credibility such that someone would come to the Congress of the United States of America, stand here, and pay tribute to what they have done to commemorate the lives of those who helped create the great America that we live in today.

They were the foundational mothers and fathers of this country. They were the persons who labored. They planted the grains, harvested the crops. They constructed roads and bridges.

The Capitol itself has benefited from their labor. This very facility that we are in has benefited from their labor. The Washington Monument benefited from their labor. The White House benefited from their labor. Their labor has made a difference.

I would have the country, the United States itself, follow the example of Georgetown University—follow the example. Let's have the truth and justice commission. We need it. The truth has to be told.

Let's have the study for reparations. There ought to be some compensation for centuries of unpaid labor, labor without recompense, labor without compensation. There ought to be some atonement by the Government of the United States of America.

Georgetown University is the exemplar. We should follow this example, and we should move expeditiously to correct, to the extent that it can be corrected, the injustice that was imposed upon human beings of African ancestry.

I believe that we who have the opportunity to stand in the well of the House of Representatives, who can vote on questions of war and peace, who can vote to fund various projects around this country, ought to establish a department of reconciliation. We ought